

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

SUPPORTING STATEMENT – PART B

**Survey of FTA Stakeholders**

(OMB Control No. 2132-0564)

B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and respondent selection

- Target population: FTA’s grantees (i.e., those organizations receiving direct funding from FTA), which include local governments, transit agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, State agencies, tribal governments and eligible non-profit organizations
- There are 1,875 grantees in the population universe, and approximately 6,500 potential respondents. (Two FTA database systems provide contact information for potential respondents; FTA added up the number of unique users who have an active role in using these two systems to arrive at the number of potential respondents. See below for more details.)
  - There may be more than one respondent per grantee, thus, why the number of potential respondents is larger than the number of grantees. Small grantee organizations (for example, rural grantees) may only have one person interacting with FTA’s systems, while larger grantees (such as grantees in large urban centers) may have 20 or more people interacting with FTA’s systems. Allowing more than one response per grantee organization is a change from previous surveys, where the universe of potential respondents was limited to the Chief Executive/Executive Director of grantee organizations. The purpose of increasing the potential respondent universe was to obtain more comprehensive feedback data and to increase the diversity of organizational perspectives. All grantees will receive at least one survey.
  - Respondents are determined based on contact information provided either to FTA’s grants management database (Transit Award Management System, or TrAMS) or to FTA’s data reporting repository (National Transit Database, or NTD). While many grantee front-line staff may not interact directly with FTA’s services or staff (for example, bus operators and maintenance staff), individuals accessing TrAMS or NTD have made verified contact with FTA services. They are also a grantee-designated point of contact. Additionally, FTA is unable to access contact information for all employees of grantees.
    - FTA took steps to ensure that potential respondents were unique, that is, they will only receive one invitation to complete the survey questionnaire, even if they actively use both FTA systems.

- Subgrantees are not included in the target population. Subgrantees very rarely come into direct contact with FTA services or staff, as their designated grantee manages these services and interactions for them. Additionally, FTA is unable to access contact information for subgrantees.
- FTA believes it is important to provide the opportunity for all grantees to complete the survey, and for grantees to have the opportunity to provide feedback from multiple roles within their organization; therefore, FTA does not intend to use sampling or restrict responses to one response per grantee.
- The most recent response rate was 32% (2019). The expected response rate is 40% for the 2021 survey.

## 2. Procedures for collecting information

- The survey will be conducted using an internet survey and software that will tabulate the responses by question and by the characteristics identified in this section.
- The survey is conducted approximately every two years to analyze trends in customer service for FTA as a whole, and provide specific feedback to each Regional office, and to Headquarters offices.
- Responses will be anonymous. FTA will not collect individual name, email, IP address or organization name from survey responses. FTA will identify respondents based on previous survey recipient characteristics, geographical area population size, organization type, organizational role, and rough geographical location based on the ten standard federal regions that FTA Regional Offices have as their service territories. Identification of respondents is kept to a minimum so that grantees can preserve their anonymity and provide candid responses on their perception of FTA's customer service.
- The survey will be sent by an electronic mail message seeking participation in order to improve FTA's customer service, including the appropriate hyperlink to the Internet site that hosts the survey. To enable FTA to identify respondents based on previous survey recipient characteristics, multiple URLs will be used. All URLs will link to a single survey, however, recipients in the previous (2019) respondent universe, Chief Executives and Executive Directors, will receive one URL, while all others from the new, expanded respondent universe will receive a second URL. The URLs will be sent in separate electronic mail batches. This will allow FTA to determine if significant differences in average response for a particular item from previous surveys are due solely to an expansion in the potential respondent population.
- Summary data will be provided in chart and/or graphical presentation to show the rating for each question.

## 3. Methods to maximize response

- The response rates were 49 percent in 2016 and 32 percent in 2019. FTA has set a goal to attain at least a 40 percent response rate for the current survey. The drop in previous response rates is unexplained, however, FTA plans to initiate several actions to increase the response rate in the current survey, seen in the bullets below.
- An initial invitation to participate from FTA's Executive Director will be sent by electronic mail.

- The survey window will be at least 4 weeks, and will be adjusted as needed to ensure that we receive a sufficient response.
- New for this survey, a follow-up from FTA's Executive Director will be sent to all recipients via electronic mail two weeks after the survey window opens.
- New for this survey, a general FTA announcement (GovDelivery) to grantees will preview the upcoming survey cycle, identify the purpose of the survey and request cooperation of the respondents. Finally, Stakeholder organizations and industry associations will be asked to publicize the survey.
- FTA does not intend to offer any special incentives for participating in the survey.
- Because the survey is anonymous, FTA cannot follow-up specifically with non-respondents. FTA will monitor responses to identify potentially underrepresented population groups, for example, transit agencies in U.S. Census-defined Urbanized Areas between 50,000 and 199,999 in population within FTA's Region 5 territory, and note them in summary data presentations and reports.
- FTA expects increased response since the survey will be sent to approximately 5,000 additional grantee employees, all of whom have interacted with FTA services and staff within the last two years.
- The questions are straightforward and do not require any computations or specialized data entry.

#### 4. Tests of procedures

- Since there have been no substantive changes in subsequent surveys after the most recent test of procedures, no additional testing was completed for the current survey. In 2014, a small group of eight transit agencies was asked to review the survey to provide their feedback on whether the questions were appropriate and relevant to FTA services provided, and were not burdensome to the agency to respond. They also provided feedback on the robustness of the customer service questions posed.

#### 5. Contact for statistical aspects and data collection

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